



CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D. C.
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

18 May 1957

George F. Kennan, Esq.
The Institute for Advanced Study
Princeton, New Jersey

Dear George:

I just received your good letter of May 6, 1957.

and

While my authority in the matter of the Lansing papers is somewhat nebulous, I am glad to give my approval for your use of the quotations or references thereto as requested. I am pleased that the papers have been of help and I am sure no one will dispute your right to use them.

Faithfully yours,

Allen W. Dulles
Director

for what it may be worth.

9-3554

THE INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY
PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

May 14, 1957

Dear Mr. Dulles:

Since Mr. Kennan signed the letter of May 6, I have been verifying citations and sources. I find there are two items not from the Lansing MSS collection for which we should have permission. One is a letter from Secretary Lansing to the elder George Kennan, found in the Kennan MSS (page XVI/27). The other is a telegram from Secretary Lansing to Mr. Polk, found in the Polk MSS (page XIX/12). I have inserted these pages in the proper numerical location.

Sincerely yours,

Dorothy M. Hessman

(Miss) Dorothy M. Hessman
Secretary

[Cy to Library of Congress
Yale University Library]

The Honorable
Allen W. Dulles,
Director, Central Intelligence Agency,
Washington 25, D. C.

THE INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY
PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

SCHOOL OF HISTORICAL STUDIES

May 6, 1957

Dear Allen:

I have now completed the second volume of my study of the early period of Soviet-American relations. In this connection, I have again availed myself of the privilege of using the papers of Robert Lansing in the Library of Congress. I enclose the sheets of the manuscript on which material is cited from these papers, or reference made to them; and I am writing to ask your permission for such quotation and your approval of such reference.

I would like to tell you again how much I appreciate the courtesy shown me in making these papers available to me, and how valuable they have been to me in this work.

Very sincerely yours,

George F. Kennan
George F. Kennan

C/o Dr. Mearns, Library of Congress.

Enclosures:

V/12-15, 23-24
VIII/23-24
XII/30
XV/22, 27
XVIII/20-21
XX/3-5, 12

The Honorable
Allen W. Dulles,
Director, Central Intelligence Agency,
Washington 25, D. C.

KENNAN

V/12

That same day Lansing, still apparently unaware of the Allied step, sent to the White House a memorandum of his own on the same subject.^{13/} The proposal for a Japanese expeditionary force was continuing to be urged, he wrote, with varying degrees of earnestness by the British, French, and Italian governments, ^{all of} which desired to make Japan a mandatory of the Powers. He went on to stress, once more, the unfavorable psychological effect intervention would inevitably have on the Russians. All Russia, he thought, would become hostile: "There could be the charge that Russia had been betrayed by her professed friends and delivered over to the yellow race." The Russians might even turn, in their embitterment, to Germany.^{14/} Nor was there any reason to believe that the military effect of a Japanese intervention, from the standpoint of the World War, would be great. The supplies at Vladivostok were not being moved to the interior, and there was no prospect of their being moved, in view of the disorganization of the railway.^{15/} In these circumstances, ^{Lansing} he registered once more the conclusion he and House and the President

^{13/} Nothing in the text of the memorandum indicated any knowledge on Lansing's part that Lord Reading was discussing this same matter with the President that day. Reading told him on the following day of his visit to Wilson. (Robert Lansing MSS, Library of Congress, Washington, Desk Diary, March 19.)

^{14/} One has here an interesting example of the way in which the war in the west dominated all Allied calculations at this time. While the French were arguing that lack of American consent to intervention would drive Japan into Germany's arms, Lansing was arguing that intervention would have precisely this effect on the Russians.

^{15/} Lansing had by this time received a reassuring report from Admiral Knight about the Vladivostok supplies.

had been voicing to each other with such monotonous regularity over the past weeks: "... it would seem unwise and inexpedient to support the request for Japanese intervention in Siberia."^{16/}

When Lansing's memorandum was returned the next day, it bore the notation: "With the foregoing the President entirely agrees."

The receipt, on March 20, of the Japanese reply to the note of March 5 naturally strengthened the President in his reluctance to contemplate any such move as the Allies were urging. The argument which had been used so effectively in late February, and which had brought him at one time so close to changing his position was, after all, that the Japanese were preparing to act anyway,^{17/} regardless of America's attitude. The Japanese reply now effectively disposed of this suggestion. Lansing and the President were both greatly pleased. ~~Ambassador Roland S. Morris, at Tokyo,~~ was instructed to tell the Japanese government that the reply was "most gratifying" and that it removed any possibility of misunderstanding "which might otherwise arise."^{18/}

During the final days of March, appeals for intervention continued to reach Lansing and the President from many quarters, other than the Allied governments. A long message from Admiral Knight, in Vladivostok, was received on March 18. It contained no specific recommendation for immediate intervention; but set forth in detail a plan for the allotment of missions among the

^{16/} Lansing MSS, op.cit., Box 2 (Confidential Memoranda & Notes, April 15, 1915 to December 20, 1918, inc.)

^{17/} See Volume I, p. 476.

^{18/} Foreign Relations, 1918, Russia, Vol. II, op.cit., p. 88.

KENNAN

V/14

Allied governments if and when intervention should finally be decided upon.^{19/} J. Butler Wright, now in Vladivostok on his way home from his post as Counselor of Embassy in Petrograd, wired his impressions of the trip across Siberia, and expressed himself as in favor of joint intervention.^{20/} Consul Charles K. Moser, in Harbin, was reporting that conditions in Siberia would be "unbearable ... unless Allies intervene."^{21/} General William V. Judson, former Military Attaché and Chief of the American Military Mission at Petrograd, called at the Department of State on March 20 and then set forth his views on paper for the Secretary. He was sure that a Japanese invasion of Siberia would throw Russia into German hands. He believed that a small United States force, acting alone, would have the opposite effect and would compel Germany to keep large forces on the eastern front. There were, he added, many possible intermediate courses and obviously some sort of compromise would be necessary. But the benefit would be proportionate to the extent that "American initiative and cooperation ... were emphasized."^{22/}

A further jolt was received on March 21, when Lord Reading brought in certain messages from Irkutsk about the prisoner-of-war situation in Siberia, emanating from the Acting British Vice Consul there and from a French intelligence officer, Colonel Pichon. (This, it will be recalled, was less than a

^{19/} A further message from Knight, of the 23rd, indicates that he showed his plan to the Japanese Admiral at Vladivostok, who took note of it without enthusiasm and without comment. (National Archives, Naval Records). *The plan does appear, however, to have had an important influence on the dispositions made when intervention actually took place some months later.*

^{20/} Foreign Relations, 1915, Russia, Vol. II, op. cit., pp. 89-91.

^{21/} Ibid., p. 93; telegram of March 23, 6 p.m., from Peking.

^{22/} National Archives, State Department File 861.00/1353¹₂.

KENNAN

7/15

British

fortnight before the visit of Webster and Hicks to that place.) The Vice Consul reported a great concentration of German prisoners about to take place at Irkutsk, and mentioned the number of 80,000.

Lansing was quite alarmed, and at once sent the messages to the President.^{23/} If the reports were true, he observed, this would place the problem of intervention in a different light.^{24/}

The President did not agree. "I am much obliged to you for sending these papers to me so promptly," he replied the next day (March 22),

but I do not find in them sufficient cause for altering our position. They still do not answer the question I have put to Lord Reading and to all others who argue in favor of intervention by Japan, namely, What is it to effect and how will it be efficacious in effecting it? The condition of Siberia furnishes no answer. ^{25/}

Now, at last, it was Lansing's turn to argue. He went back at the President with a letter (March 24) in which, for the first time, he really came close to arguing in favor of intervention -- though only on the hypothesis that the alarming reports about the prisoners were correct. He posed for the President the question as to whether, if the reports proved true, there was anything to be lost

^{23/} Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States: The Lansing Papers, 1914-1920, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, 1940, Vol. II, p. 357.

^{24/} Lansing MSS, op.cit., Diary Blue Boxes, Box 2: Lansing Memoranda of March 22 and April 6.

^{25/} Foreign Relations, The Lansing Papers, Vol. II, op.cit., p. 357.

Knight naturally watched the Japanese landing with the greatest of interest. He did not question the good faith of the Japanese action. The landing appeared, he wired, to have been dictated by necessity. But he decided to take no parallel action at the moment. "Shall only land force if our interests are threatened," he wired to the Navy Department on the day of the landing,

... which is not the case at present. Have informed Japanese Admiral of my position and stated that any concerted action beyond protection of nationals must be arranged by our governments. 41/

Official Washington, too, was obliged to ask itself whether Admiral Knight should not be instructed to follow suit. The British Ambassador urged on Lansing (April 8) that instructions to this effect be sent to the Admiral at once.42/ There was strong support for this suggestion among Lansing's aides; but the Secretary was firmly opposed. The Japanese-British landing, he said in a memorandum to the President of April 10,

... in no way affects my opinion as to this Government's policy. ...

I think it would be unwise, in view of the reports we have received, to permit American marines to land. The state of affairs in Russia proper is in my opinion against such a policy. In this I disagree with the judgment of Mr. Long, Mr. Miles and others who have this matter in charge in the Department. 43/

41/ National Archives, Navy Section; Knight's telegram of April 5.

42/ Ibid., Foreign Affairs Section; State Department File 861.00/1448.

43/ Lansing MSS, op.cit., Diary Blue Boxes, Box 2.

There is no record of Wilson's reply to this memorandum. The two men had discussed the matter the previous afternoon (Lansing's Desk Diary, entry of April 9). Lansing's position was obviously fully approved by the President.

He added, somewhat irrelevantly, "I am entirely responsible for the present policy which is opposed to intervention by the Japanese in a mandatory capacity."

On April 15 Heading came in to assure the Secretary of the purely local character of the British and Japanese landings; and on April 17 the Japanese Charge d'Affaires called and assured Lansing that his government was prepared to withdraw its marines again as soon as conditions might permit.

The Japanese marines were not, however, in fact withdrawn. They remained in Vladivostok throughout the ensuing weeks, patrolling the vicinity of the Japanese Consulate and to some extent the entire city. The Communists hotly resented their presence, and there was no lack of minor incidents; but the local Bolshevik leaders did not feel strong enough to challenge the Japanese and British at that time. They therefore swallowed their irritation and endeavored to place on their natural political impulses a restraint sufficient to avoid provocation for further Allied action.

Very soon thereafter the Vladivostok situation began to be complicated by another factor destined to have, in the end, a more decisive influence on the affairs of that city and region than did the presence of the Allied marines. This was the arrival there of the first of the Czech forces trying to make their way from European Russia over the Trans-Siberian Railway to the Pacific and thence, via the United States, to the western front.

* * *

The news of the Japanese landing was naturally received with most intense alarm and suspicion by the Bolshevik leaders in Moscow. It was first taken as the beginning of intervention. Lenin at once despatched to the Vladivostok Soviet a message voicing this interpretation:

But immediately after learning of Summers' wire, DeGruce delicately hinted to Robins that it might be best for him to leave. "Do not feel I should be justified," he wired to Robins on (or about) the 22nd,

in asking you to remain longer in Moscow to neglect of the prosecution of your Red Cross work, but this does not imply any want of appreciation of the service you have rendered me in keeping me advised concerning matters important for me to know, and giving suggestions and advice, as well as being a channel of unofficial communication with the Soviet government. ... 29/

Robins was himself, by this time, coming to the view that there was no point in his remaining longer in Russia without greater support from Washington. To him, the arrival of the German Embassy had always seemed to be a sort of deadline. He had maintained for weeks that if "collaboration" could not be arranged by May 1, the immediate game was up. Now, on April 25 -- two days after the arrival of the new German ambassador, Count Mirbach -- he wired to Devison and to the Washington headquarters of the Red Cross:

... Liquidation American Red Cross supplies relief work Russia practically complete. Recommend return all members mission America. Planning departure about May fifteenth. ... 30/

By sheer coincidence, both the Department of State and the ^{American} National Red Cross headquarters had arrived, at precisely the same time but by wholly independent processes, at the very same conclusion -- namely, that Robins must leave.

Even before this time, there had already been signs of some anxiety in the Department about Robins' position in Moscow. What brought this on is not clear. A suggestion contained in a note received by the Department from the

29/ Gunning & Pettit, op.cit., p. 156.

30/ Ibid., p. 202.

DENKAW

VIII/24

British Embassy on April 19, to the effect that "Colonel Robins" he directed to state to the Soviet government an agreed Allied position on intervention and several other matters, may have come as a shock to the Secretary and his Advisers, revealing as it did the extent to which Robins was already regarded in Allied circles as the official United States representative to the Soviet government. On the 23rd, furthermore, the Department had cabled to Francis that Robins was "cabling to Thompson and also Red Cross direct without Embassy's knowledge on matters of political policy," and had told Francis to see that such messages came in future only through the Embassy or the Moscow Consulate General. Now, on April 25, the Secretary of State, according to his desk diary, had an interview with the Counselor, Frank Polk, "on getting Raymond Robbins out of Russia thru Red Cross," and a second interview with Assistant Secretary of State Wilbur Carr "on Raymond Robbins and Summers." 31/ The Secretary also had before him, at this time, Summers' request for a transfer and the aroused message from Billard about the inquisitiveness of Browne and Oberg with regard to Sisson and his documents. Sisson, furthermore, now in London en route to the United States, had just sent a telegram (April 24) to his principals in Washington recommending that all representatives of the Committee on Public Information and the Red Cross be ordered out of Russia within a fortnight. The reason for this recommendation was his assumption that his documents would be published by the American government immediately upon his own arrival in Washington, and that this would cause the Soviet government to take reprisals.

31/ Lansing MSS, op.cit.

KENNAN

XII/30

Japanese intervention in Siberia ...

In view of the present situation do you think it wise to advise Francis to urge through unofficial channels in obtaining from Trotsky a request for us to intervene by way of Murmansk? I do not feel that we should go further than this at the present time and I am not sure that this is expedient in view of the uncertainty of Trotsky's power. ...

Will you please give me your opinion as to the course which should be taken?

... 31/

To these communications, the President replied on May 20:

I do not know what to say by way of comment on these papers that I have not already said repeatedly. The two parts of this question (as you properly discriminate them) must not and cannot be confused and discussed together. Semenoff is changing the situation in Siberia very rapidly, apparently; and General March and the Staff are clear and decided in their opinion that (1) no strong enough force to amount to anything can be sent to Murmansk without subtracting just that much shipping and man power from the western front, and (2) that such a subtraction at the present crisis would be most unwise ... 32/

Lansing, dining that evening (May 20) at the British Embassy, took the opportunity to tell Reading that the President's views on intervention, which had been expressed on a number of occasions, remained unchanged. 32/

There is nothing in these interviews between Reading and Lansing to suggest that either man had, at that time, any knowledge either of the decisions of the Abbeville meeting of the Supreme War Council, concerning the routing of a portion of the Czechs to the northern ports, or of the British military plan -- then in process of adoption -- that flowed from the Abbeville decision.

30/ Foreign Relations, The Lansing Papers, 1914-1920, Vol. II (1940), p. 361.

31/ Ibid., p. 361.

32/ Lansing MSS, op.cit., Desk Diary.

other Allied participation in a possible expedition. Ishii thought personally that American participation, in particular, would be most welcome to the Japanese government, and he suggested that an expedition composed of Japanese, Chinese, and Americans would go far to remove Russian suspicions. Lansing suggested to him that he obtain his government's authority to make this statement, which Ishii undertook to do. The talk then turned on the number of troops required, and how far an expedition should advance. Lansing ended by impressing on his visitor the need for holding German forces in the East, and painted a vivid picture of the danger, in the event of a German victory in France, of Germany's turning eastward and becoming the mistress of Siberia.^{33/} All this was put forward in terms that would have sounded nothing but familiar had they issued, at that juncture, from the lips of Balfour himself.

Lansing and the President saw Ishii on several occasions in the ensuing days. The notations on the latter's visits to Lansing's office, as recorded on the Secretary's desk calendar, indicate the subject of discussion (on May 6) as "his Gov[ernmen]t's desire to control any military movement in Siberia," and (on May 11) "impossibility of Japan supplying tonnage to transport our troops to Siberia."^{34/} On May 16 the American Ambassador in Tokyo, Mr. Roland S. Morris, was able to report back to Washington that discussion of the entire question of intervention had been revived very actively in Tokyo within the past fortnight owing -- among other things -- to a "report from Ishii to his Government that

^{33/} Ibid., pp. 144-145; from Lansing's letter to Wilson of April 29.

^{34/} Lansing MSS, op.cit., Desk Diary.

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Dulles

I understand from Mr. Chapin that you had planned to discuss with your brother the possibility of releasing the Lansing papers to the public.

Alice is holding a letter for you to show to him. *(Attached)*

cc
JAS

17 May 57
(DATE)

FORM NO. 101 REPLACES FORM 10-101
1 AUG 54 WHICH MAY BE USED.

(47)